

with diabetes ahead of politics. Let us enact this fine legislation as one of the first examples that we can and will work together to serve the American people. Let us take as our example the outstanding commitment of Representative FURSE to accomplish this objective not for personal or political gain, but because it is the right thing to do.

I am happy to be part of this effort, and look forward to speedy enactment of this important legislation.

#### INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO EXPAND THE PROTECTIONS OF THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

HON. WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY  
OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 1997*

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to expand the protections afforded by the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). The legislation I am introducing is substantially similar to legislation introduced in the last Congress by our distinguished former colleague, Patricia Schroeder.

The FMLA grants employees the right to unpaid leave in the event of a family or medical emergency without jeopardizing their jobs. As former chairman of the Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations of the Committee on Education and Labor, I was privileged to work closely with pat Schroeder, the Hon. MARGE ROUKEMA, Senator CHRIS DODD, our former colleague the Hon. William D. Ford, and others to bring about the enactment of this important law. Necessarily, many compromises were made to bring about this precedent setting legislation.

Among the most important of those compromises was one that limited the applicability of the law to employers of 50 or more employees. My original intention had been to extend the law to employers of 25 or more employees. However, because of uncertainty regarding the impact of the law on employers and in order to increase support for the legislation, I agreed to accept the 50 employee threshold.

The effect of this compromise was to leave approximately 15 million employees outside of the protections afforded by the FMLA. The fact that an employee may work for an employer of 40 rather than 50 people does not immunize that employee from the vicissitudes of life, nor diminish that employee's need for the protections afforded by the FMLA.

The FMLA was signed into law on February 5, 1993. Experience has shown that the law does not unduly disrupt employer operations. Not only are the costs to employers of complying with the law negligible, but in many instances the FMLA has led to improvements in employer operations by improving employee morale and productivity, and by reducing employee turnover. Experiences has also shown that the protections afforded by the law are not only beneficial, but are essential in enabling workers to balance the demands of work and home when faced with a family or medical emergency. In short, we have now had sufficient experience under the law to justify extending the law to employers of 25 or more employees.

Beyond expanding the number of workplaces that are protected by the FMLA, the bill

I am introducing also allows workers to take up to 24 hours of FMLA leave for the purpose of participating in school activities, to accompany children to routine dental or medical appointments, or to accompany an elderly relative to routine medical appointments or other professional services. The 24-hour provision was also originally a part of Mrs. Schroeder's legislation. However, I have modified those provisions to reflect a similar proposal that has been put forward by President Clinton. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

#### INTRODUCTION OF FIRE LEGISLATION

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY  
OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 1997*

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that would create three additional enterprise zones targeted toward the financial institution, banking, and real estate or FIRE industries. I have consistently supported enterprise zones and think the intense competition for both the zone and community designation provides ample evidence of the broad support for these efforts.

My city of Hartford, CT applied for designation as an enterprise community but was denied. But when I started looking at the details, it was clear to me that while empowerment zones/enterprise communities are excellent economic development tools, they just don't quite fit all areas.

The tax incentives in empowerment zones include a wage credit, expensing of up to \$75,000 and a loosening of restrictions on tax-exempt bonds—all incentives seemingly geared to manufacturing. Hartford and a number of other cities around the Nation, however, are different—our base is services and we would frankly benefit from a different mixture of tax incentives.

Let me talk about Hartford for a moment. Hartford has long been known as the insurance capital of the world. We have also traditionally been a center for financial services. However, any reader of the Wall Street Journal knows of the consolidation in the banking industry and that real estate in many parts of New England is still in a severe slump. On top of this, we are in the midst of unprecedented change in the insurance industry. In the past 3 years every major insurer in Hartford has either been a merger participant and/or acquired or jettisoned a major line of business.

But because this proposal isn't just about Hartford. In the past decade, we have seen unprecedented change in our financial services industries. We have had banking and S&L problems, face increasing competition in the global marketplace, and again this year will debate allowing banking, and other service industries including securities and insurance to affiliate. In addition, we have seen Bermuda attract over \$4 billion in insurance capital in the past few years. It is certainly a beautiful place, but most important, it's also a tax haven.

And while change can be good, it does create a tremendous amount of uncertainty. With each and every merger or spinoff, every mayor and every city council, not to mention the thousands of affected employees who ask

the same two questions: What does this mean for jobs; and what impact does this have on the property tax base and real estate values?

This legislation would create three additional zones with tax incentives targeted to services. Specifically, these FIRE zones would be patterned after existing enterprise zones, but could encompass an entire city or municipality, and more important, could include central business districts. Eligibility would be the same as for existing enterprise zones, with an additional requirement that an eligible city would have to have experienced the loss of at least 12 percent of FIRE industry employment, or alternatively, 5,000 jobs.

In lieu of traditional enterprise zone tax incentives, new or existing businesses in FIRE zones would receive a range of tax incentives.

First, to deal with jobs, there would be a wage credit for the creation of new jobs within the zone. This would encourage businesses to hire displaced and underemployed insurance, real estate, and banking workers as well as to create entry level jobs for clerks and janitors.

Second, to deal with the high commercial vacancy rate problem that plagues many cities, there would be unlimited expensing on FIRE buildouts and computer equipment. The proposal would also remove the passive loss restrictions on historic rehabilitation.

Next, to provide an incentive for investors, the proposal would provide for a reduction in the individual capital gains rate for zone property held for 5 years to 10 percent. In addition, capital gains on zone property would not be considered a preference item for individual alternative minimum tax purposes. The corporate capital gains tax rate would also be reduced, to 17 percent.

Finally, many big cities aren't always as safe as we would like. Therefore, the proposal would provide for a double deduction for security expense within the zone. This should give employers an added stake in the safety of our cities.

I would urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

#### NORTH MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR, KEVIN KENNISON

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 7, 1997*

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the North Miami Police Department's 1996 Officer of the Year, Officer Kevin Kennison. Chosen from a committee of his peers, his outstanding record in law enforcement makes him a fitting choice.

Officer Kennison joined the North Miami police force in June 1992. Quickly, he earned the respect of his peers and superiors through tenacity and dedication. In July 1993, he shared with several other officers the honor of Officer of the Month. Continuing his fine work, he again earned that title in August 1994 and October 1996.

Because of his unbridled enthusiasm, Officer Kennison was among the first chosen to participate in North Miami's Crime Suppression Unit, a specialized group of officers selected to target problem areas.